

MSTISLAV ROSTROPOVICH

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September 19, 1978

The President
and Mrs. Carter
The White House

My Dear Mr. President and Mrs. Carter,

Sunday evening, after the concert in the White House, my family sat before the television in our hotel room and all four of us cried like children with tears of joy.

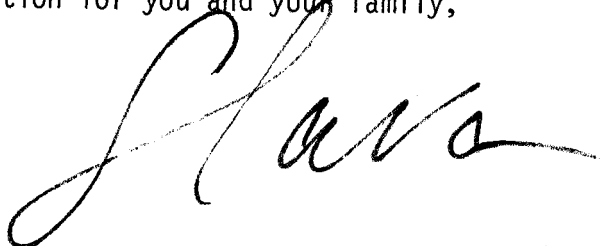
It might seem strange, but please believe me, that during the concert I had a very special feeling towards your absence, Mr. President. There was not even a shadow of dissatisfaction. On the contrary, my feelings were of belief that through your efforts would come a celebration for the whole world, and, during the hour of the concert, my faith in that was strongest.

I must say that Mrs. Carter "conducted" the proceeding of the concert with such extraordinary graciousness, simplicity and sincerity that our whole family will never forget her kindness to us.

To the chorus of delight of the whole world and of my people (please do not think that the government of the U.S.S.R. is the people!) I want to add only one thing -- perhaps the most meaningful to me personally. If President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin had not believed in you as a HUMAN BEING (not as a president -- for surely presidents can be more talented or less, or even not exceedingly intelligent?), if they had not felt your human qualities, I am sure there would have been no triumph of agreement. You were victorious not only as a President, but as a man of honesty, integrity and goodness. These qualities of yours have renewed my belief in the power of human goodness. Thank you.

With deep gratitude and affection for you and your family,

Mstislav Rostropovich



NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20566